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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF JOHN WOOLMAN.

"If there be merit in a man, hold it well forth
To the admiring world, forming for him
a wreath of fame,
A stimulus to the indolence of others."—

ANON.

IN this department of the Magazine the lives of many, eminent for their good qualities, have been communicated. In most cases each has been allowed to speak in his own language, or the peculiar style of the sect, of which he was a member. The subject of this memoir was a Quaker; and to give a true transcript of the man, much of the peculiar phraseology characteristic of the style of that people is necessarily introduced. General readers will make the due allowance, and will also perceive that in other cases a similar line of allowing each to use his own language, was adopted.

In selecting articles of biography, the deeds of warriors have been passed over. The actions of good men in the more retired walks of life, and of various sentiments and diverse creeds, have, in preference, been communicated. The apostles of genuine philanthropy have had a distinguished place; and among these John Woolman is eminently conspicuous. He was a virtuous forerunner in the work of the abolition of the slave trade, in which so considerable a progress has been made; a progress, honourable to the present age, notwithstanding its many errors in other respects. It is honourable to have had precedence in such a cause; and the

merit of those who commence reforms, is even greater, than of those, on whom frequently the easier task of consummating reformation devolves.

JOHN WOOLMAN was born in Northampton, in Burlington county, New Jersey, in the year 1720. He was a man endued with a large natural capacity, great tenderness of heart, and genuine philanthropy. In his Journal of his life and labours, however, from which we take the liberty of making large extracts, he relates an instance of his cruelty when he was a child, which appears to have made a strong and salutary impression on his mind:—"Once going to a neighbour's house," says he, "I saw on the way, a *Robin* sitting on her nest, and as I came near she went off, but having young ones, flew about, and with many cries expressed her concern for them; I stood and threw stones at her, 'till one striking her, she fell down dead: at first I was pleased with the exploit, but after a few minutes was seized with horror, as having, in a sportive way, killed an innocent creature while she was careful of her young: I beheld her lying dead, and thought those young ones, for which she was so careful, must now perish for the want of their dam to nourish them; and after some painful considerations on the subject, I climbed up the tree, took all the young birds, and killed them; supposing that better than to leave them to pine away and die miserably. I then went on my errand; but, for some hours, could think of nothing else but the cruelties I had committed, and was much troubled. Thus He, whose tender

der mercies are over all his works, hath placed a principle in the human mind, which incites to exercise goodness towards every living creature; and this being singly attended to, people become tender-hearted and sympathizing; but being frequently and totally rejected, the mind becomes shut up in a contrary disposition."

John Woolman's parents early instructed him in the principles of the Quaker religion. In the 22d year of his age, he had given such proofs of the integrity of his life, and of his religious qualifications, that he became an acknowledged minister of the gospel in his own society. "I was early convinced," says he, "in my own mind, that true religion consisted in an inward life, wherein the heart doth love and reverence God the Creator, and learns to exercise true justice and goodness, not only towards all men, but towards the brute creation. I found no narrowness respecting sects and opinions; but believed that sincere, upright-hearted people, in every society, who truly love God, were accepted of him."

At a time previous to his entering on the ministry, being in low circumstances, he agreed, for wages, to attend shop for a person at Mount Holly, and to keep his books. In this situation he began to think seriously, and to conceive proper views of the Christian unlawfulness of Negro slavery. His concern also, for the poor, and those in affliction, was evident by his visits to them; he frequently relieved them by his assistance and charity.

"During my residence at Mount Holly," says he, "my employer having a Negro woman, sold her, and desired me to write a bill of sale, the man being waiting who bought her: The thing was sudden; and though the thoughts of writing

an instrument of slavery for one of my fellow-creatures felt uneasy, yet I remembered I was hired by the year, that it was my master who directed me to do it, and that it was an elderly man, a member of our society, who bought her; so, through weakness, I gave way, and wrote it; but, at the executing it, I was so afflicted in my mind, that I said, before my master and the purchaser, that I believed slave-keeping to be a practice inconsistent with the Christian religion. This in some degree abated my uneasiness; yet as often as I reflected seriously upon it, I thought I should have been clearer, if I had desired to be excused from it, as a thing against my conscience; for such it was. Some time after this, a young man, of our society, spoke to me to write a conveyance of a slave to him; he having lately taken a Negro into his house: I told him I was not easy to write it; for, though many members of our meeting and persons in other places kept slaves, I still believed the practice was not right; and desired to be excused from the writing. I spoke to him in good will; and he told me, that keeping slaves was not altogether agreeable to his mind; but that the slave being a gift made to his wife, he had accepted of her."

It may be easily conceived that a person so scrupulous on this subject (as indeed John Woolman was on all others) was in the way of becoming in time eminently serviceable to his oppressed fellow-creatures. A journey, which he took as a minister of the gospel among the Quakers, in 1746, through the provinces of Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, which were then more noted than others for the number of slaves in them, contributed to prepare him as an instrument for the advancement of the great cause of the

abolition of the slave trade. The following are his own observations upon this journey. "Two things were remarkable to me on this journey; First, in regard to my entertainment. When I ate, drank, and lodged free-cost, with people who lived in ease on the hard labour of their slaves, I felt uneasy; I found, from place to place, this uneasiness return upon me at times through the whole visit. Where the masters bore a good share of the burden, and lived frugally, so that their servants were well provided for, and their labour moderate, I felt more easy. But where they lived in a costly way, and laid heavy burdens on their slaves, my exercise was often great, and I frequently had conversations with them in private concerning it. Secondly, This trade of importing slaves from their native country being much encouraged among them, and the White people and their children so generally living without much labour, was frequently the subject of my serious thoughts: and I saw in these southern provinces so many vices and corruptions, increased by this trade and this way of life, that it appeared to me as a gloom over the land."

In the year 1749 he was married to Sarah Ellis, and in the fall of the year 1750, his father died.

"In my father's life-time," says John Woolman, "he manifested much care for his children, that in our youth we might learn to fear the Lord; often endeavouring to imprint in our minds the true principles of virtue, and particularly to cherish in us a spirit of tenderness, not only towards poor people, but also towards all creatures of which we had the command.

"After my return from Carolina in the year 1746, I made some observations on keeping slaves, which some time before his decease I showed him; and he perused the manu-

script, proposed a few alterations, and appeared well satisfied that I found a concern on that account: And in his last sickness, as I was watching with him one night, he being so far spent that there was no expectation of his recovery, but having the perfect use of his understanding, he asked me concerning the manuscript, whether I expected soon to proceed to take the advice of friends in publishing it? and, after some conversation thereon, said, I have all along been deeply affected with the oppression of the poor Negroes; and now, at last, my concern for them is as great as ever."

From the year 1747 to the year 1753, John Woolman seems to have been occupied chiefly as a minister of religion; in the latter year he published his work upon slave-keeping; and in the same year, while travelling within the compass of his own monthly meeting, a circumstance happened, which kept alive his attention to the same subject. "About this time," says he, "a person at some distance lying sick, his brother came to me to write his will. I knew he had slaves, and asking his brother, was told, he intended to leave them as slaves to his children. As writing was a profitable employment, and as offending sober people was disagreeable to my inclination, I was straitened in my mind, but as I looked to the Lord he inclined my heart to his testimony; and I told the man, that I believed the practice of continuing slavery to this people was not right, and that I had a scruple in my mind against doing writings of that kind; that, though many in our Society kept them as slaves, still I was not easy to be concerned in it, and desired to be excused from going to write the will. He made no reply to what I said, but went away: he also had some concerns in the prac-

tice, and I thought he was displeased with me. In this case, I had a fresh confirmation, that acting contrary to present outward interest from a motive of Divine love, and in regard to truth and righteousness, opens the way to a treasure better than silver, and to a friendship exceeding the friendship of men.

"Deep-rooted customs, though wrong, are not easily altered; but it is the duty of every one to be firm in that which they certainly know is right for them. A charitable benevolent man, well acquainted with a Negro, may, I believe, under some circumstances, keep him in his family as a servant, on no other motives than the Negroe's good; but man, as man, knows not what shall be after him, nor hath he any assurance that his children will attain to that perfection in wisdom and goodness necessary rightly to exercise such power: Hence it appeared clear to me, that I ought not to be the scribe where wills are drawn, in which some children are made absolute masters over others during life."

From 1753 to 1755, two circumstances of a similar kind took place, which contributed greatly to strengthen him in the path he had taken; for in both these cases the persons who requested him to make their wills, were so impressed by the principle upon which he refused them, and by his manner of doing it, that they bequeathed liberty to their slaves.

"Until the year 1756," says John Woolman, "I continued to retail goods besides following the trade of a taylor. I had begun with selling trimmings for garments, and from thence proceeded to sell cloaths and linens; and, at length, having got a considerable shop of goods, my trade increased every year, and the road to large business appeared open;

but the increase of business became my burden; for though my natural inclination was towards merchandize, yet I believed truth required me to live more free from outward incumbrance: I therefore lessened my business; and in a while wholly laid down merchandize, following my trade as a taylor. I also had a nursery of apple-trees, in which I employed some of my time in hoeing, grafting, trimming, and inoculating."

In the year 1756, he made a religious visit to several of the society in Long Island. Here it was that the seed, long fostered by the genial influences of Heaven, began to burst forth into fruit. Till this time, he seems to have been a passive instrument, attending only to such circumstances as came in his way on this subject. But now he became an active one. "My mind," says he, "was deeply engaged in this visit, both in public and private; and at several places observing, that members kept slaves, I found myself under a necessity, in a friendly way, to labour with them on that subject, expressing, as the way opened, the inconsistency of that practice with the purity of the Christian religion."

In the year 1757, he felt his mind so deeply interested on the subject of the slave trade, that he resolved to travel over Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, in order to try to convince persons, principally in his own society, of the inconsistency of holding slaves. He joined his brother with him in this arduous service.

"As the people in this, and the southern provinces," says he, "live much on the labour of slaves, many of whom are used hardly, my concern was, that I might attend with singleness of heart to the voice of the true shepherd, and be so sup-

ported, as to remain unmoved at the faces of men."

It is impossible for us to follow him in detail through the whole of this long and interesting journey, when the bounds prescribed in the Biographical department of this work are considered. It appears that in this journey he conversed with persons occasionally who were not of his own society, with a view of answering their arguments, and of endeavouring to evince the wickedness and impolicy of slavery. In discoursing with these, however strenuous he might appear, he seems never to have departed from a calm, modest, and yet dignified, and even friendly demeanour. At the public meetings for discipline, held by his own society in these provinces, he endeavoured to display the same truths, and in the same manner, but particularly to the elders of his own society, exhorting them, as the most conspicuous rank, to be careful of their conduct, and to give a bright example in the liberation of their slaves. He had the well earned satisfaction of finding his admonitions kindly received by some, and of seeing a disposition in others to follow the advice he had given them.

In the year 1758, he attended the yearly meeting at Philadelphia, where he addressed his brethren on the propriety of dealing with such members, as should hereafter purchase slaves. On the discussion of this point, he spoke a second time, and to such effect, that he had the satisfaction at that meeting of seeing minutes made more fully than any before, and a committee appointed for the advancement of the great object to which he had been instrumental, in turning the attention of many, and to witness a considerable spreading of the cause. In the same year also, he joined himself with two others of the society to

visit such members of it, as possessed slaves in Chester county. In this journey, he describes himself to have met with several who were pleased with his visit, but to have found difficulties with others, towards whom, however, he felt a sympathy and tenderness on account of their being entangled by the spirit of the world.

In the year 1759, he visited several of the society who held slaves in Philadelphia.

In the year 1760, he visited Rhode Island, to promote the abolition of the slave trade. This island had been long noted for its trade to Africa for slaves. He found at Newport, the great sea-port town belonging to it, that a number of them had been lately imported. He felt his mind deeply impressed on this account. He was almost overpowered in consequence of it, and became ill. He thought once of promoting a petition to the legislature, to discourage all such importations in future. He then thought of going and speaking to the House of Assembly, which was then sitting; but he was discouraged from both these proceedings. He held, however, a conference with many of his own society, where the subject of his visit was discussed on both sides, with a calm and peaceable spirit. Many of those present manifested the concern they felt at their former practices, and others a desire of taking suitable care of their slaves at their decease.

In the year 1761, he visited Pennsylvania, and, in about three months afterwards, Shrewsbury and Squan in New Jersey. On his return home, he added a second part to the treatise before published on the keeping of slaves.

In the year 1762, he printed, published, and distributed this treatise.

In 1767, he went on foot to the western shores of the same province on a religious visit.

The travelling on foot, though it was agreeable to the state of his mind, he describes to have been wearisome to his body. He felt himself weak at times, in consequence of it, but yet continued to travel on. At one of the quarterly meetings of the society, being in great sorrow and under deep exercise on account of the miseries of the poor Africans, he expressed himself freely to those present who held them in bondage. He expatiated on the tenderness and loving-kindness of the apostles, as manifested in labours, perils, and sufferings, towards the poor Gentiles, and contrasted their treatment of the Gentiles with it, whom he described in the persons of their slaves; and was much satisfied with the result of his discourse.

"In my youth," says he, in his *Journal*, "I was used to hard labour; and though I was middling healthy, yet my nature was not fitted to endure so much as many others: that being often weary, I was prepared to sympathize with those whose circumstances in life, as free men, required constant labour to answer the demands of their creditors; and with others under oppression. In the uneasiness of body, which I have many times felt by too much labour, not as a forced but a voluntary oppression, I have often been excited to think on the original cause of that oppression, which is imposed on many in the world. A belief was gradually settled in my mind, that if such who had great estates, generally lived in that humility and plainness which belongs to a Christian life, and laid much easier rents and interests on their lands and monies, and thus led the way to a right use of things, so great a number of people might be employed in things

useful, that labour both for men and other creatures would need to be no more than an agreeable employment; and divers branches of business, which serve chiefly to please the natural inclinations of our minds, and which, at present, seem necessary to circulate that wealth which some gather, might, in this way of pure wisdom, be discontinued. And as I have thus considered these things, a query, at times, has arisen:—do I, in all my proceedings, keep to that use of things which is agreeable to universal righteousness? And then there hath some degree of sadness, at times, come over me; for that I accustomed myself to some things, which occasioned more labour than I believe Divine wisdom intends for us.*

* The following excellent remarks, which show John Woolman's amiable and humane disposition, are extracted from a small tract written by him, entitled, "*A Word of Remembrance and Caution to the Rich*," but which was not published until after his death.

"Wealth, desired for its own sake, obstructs the increase of virtue; and large possessions, in the hands of selfish men, have a bad tendency; for, by their means, too small a number of people are employed in useful things; and some of them are necessitated to labour too hard, while others would want business to earn their bread, were not employments invented, which having no real usefulness, serve only to please the vain mind.

"Rents set on lands are often so high, that persons of but small substance, are straitened in taking farms, and while tenants are healthy and prosperous in business, they often find occasion to labour harder than was intended by our gracious Creator.

"Many poor people are so thronged in their business, that it is difficult for them to provide shelter for their cattle, against the storm. These things are common, when in health; but, through sickness and inability to labour, through loss of cattle, and miscarriage in business, many are so straitened, so much of their in-

"Being thus fully convinced, and feeling an increasing desire to live in the spirit of peace, I was often sorrowfully affected with thinking

on the unquiet spirit in which wars are generally carried on, and with the miseries of many of my fellow-creatures engaged therein ; some

crease goes to pay rent, that they have not wherewith to buy what their case requires.

"Hence, one poor woman, in tending on her children, and providing for her family, does as much business as would for the time be suitable employment for two or three; and honest persons are often straitened to give their children suitable learning. The money which the wealthy receive from the poor, who do more than a proper share of business in raising it, is frequently paid to other poor people, for doing business which is foreign to the true use of things. Men who have large estates, and live in the spirit of charity; who carefully inspect the circumstances of those who occupy their estates, and, regardless of the customs of the times, regulate their demands agreeably to universal love, by being righteous on principle, do good to the poor, without placing it to an act of bounty.

"Their example, in avoiding superfluities, tends to excite moderation in others; their uprightness, in not exacting what the laws and customs would support them in, tends to open the channel to moderate labour in useful affairs, and to discourage those branches of business which have not their foundation in true wisdom.

"To be busied in that which is but vanity, and serves only to please the insatiable mind, tends to an alliance with those who promote that vanity, and is a snare in which many poor tradesmen are entangled.

"To be employed in things connected with virtue, is most agreeable with the character and inclinations of an honest man.

"While industrious, frugal people are borne down with poverty, and oppressed with too much labour in useful things, the way to apply money, without promoting pride and vanity, remains open to such as truly sympathise with them in their various difficulties.

"Were all superfluities, and the desire of outward greatness, laid aside, and the right use of things universally attended to, such a number of people might be employed in things useful, as that moderate la-

bour, with the blessing of Heaven, would answer all good purposes relating to people and their cattle, and a sufficient number have time to attend on the proper affairs of civil society.

"Men of large estates, whose hearts are enlarged, are like fathers to the poor; and in looking over their brethren in distressed circumstances, and considering their own more easy condition, they find a field for humble meditation, and feel the strength of those obligations they are under, to be kind and tender hearted toward them. Poor men, eased of their burdens, and released from too close an application to business, are enabled to hire assistance, to provide well for their cattle, and find time to perform those duties amongst their neighbours, which belong to a well guided social life. When these reflect on the opportunity those had to oppress them, and consider the goodness of their conduct, they behold it lovely and consistent with brotherhood; and, as the man whose mind is conformed to universal love, hath his trust settled in God, and finds a firm foundation to stand upon, in any changes or revolutions that happen amongst men, so also, the goodness of his conduct tends to spread a kind benevolent disposition in the world.

"It is good for those who live in affluence, to cultivate tenderness of heart, and improve every opportunity of being acquainted with the hardships and fatigues of those who labour for their living; and to think seriously with themselves, am I influenced by true charity in fixing all my demands? Have I no desire to support myself in expensive customs, because my acquaintances live in those customs?

"Were I to labour, as they do, toward supporting them and their children in a station like mine, in such sort as they and their children labour for us, could I not on such a change, before I entered into agreements of rent or interest, name some costly articles now used by me, or in my family, which have no real use in them, the expense whereof might be lessened: and should I not, in such case, strongly desire the disuse of those needless articles,

suddenly destroyed; some wounded, and after much pain remain cripples; some deprived of all their outward substance, and reduced to want; and some carried into captivity."

that, less answering their way of life, the terms might be easier to me?

"People, spent with much labour, often take strong liquor to revive them. The portion of the necessaries of life, answerable to a day's work, is such, that those who support their families by day-labour, find occasion to labour hard, and many of them think strong drink a necessary part of their entertainment.

"The quantity of spirituous liquors imported and made in our country is great; nor can so many thousand hogsheads of this liquor be drank every year in our country, without having a powerful effect on our manners.

"When people are spent with action, and take these liquors not only as a refreshment from past labours, but also to support them to go on, without nature having a sufficient time to recruit, by resting, it gradually turns them from that calmness of thought, which attends those who apply their hearts to true wisdom. That the spirits being scattered by too much bodily motion, and again revived by strong drink, makes a person unfit for divine meditation, I suppose will not be denied; and as multitudes of people are in this practice, who do not take so much as to hinder them from managing their affairs, this custom is strongly supported.

"Suppose twenty free men, professed followers of Christ, discovered an island unknown to all other people, and that they, with their wives, independent of all others, took possession of it, and divided it equally, and made improvements; suppose these first possessors, being generally influenced by true love, did with paternal regard look over the increasing condition of the inhabitants, and near the end of their lives, gave such directions concerning their respective possessions, as best suited the convenience of the whole, and tended to preserve love and harmony; and that their successors in the continued increase of people, generally followed their pious example, and pursued means the most effectual to keep oppression out of their island; but that one of these first settlers from a fond attachment to one of

Having long wished to visit the Indians at Wehaloosing, on the river Susquehanna, he crossed the western branch of Delaware, called the Great Lelie near Fort-Allen. "Here,"

his numerous sons, no more deserving than the rest, gives the chief of his lands to him; and by an instrument sufficiently witnessed, strongly expressed his mind and will.

"Suppose this son, being landlord to his brethren and nephews, demands such a portion of the fruits of the earth, as may supply him, and his family, and some others, and that those others thus supplied out of his store, are employed in adorning his building with curious engravings and paintings, preparing carriages to ride in, vessels for his house, delicious meat, fine wrought apparel and furniture, all suiting that distinction lately arisen between him and the other inhabitants; and that having the absolute disposal of these numerous improvements, his power so increaseth, that in all conferences relative to the public affairs of the island, these plain honest men, who are zealous for equitable establishments, find great difficulty in proceeding agreeably to their inclinations.

"Suppose he, from a fondness of one of his sons, joined with a desire to continue this grandeur under his own name, confirms the chief of his possessions to him, and thus, for many ages, over near a twentieth part of this island, there is one great landlord, and the rest poor oppressed people; to some of whom, from the manner of their education, joined with a notion of the greatness of their predecessors, labour is disagreeable; who, therefore, by artful applications to the weakness, unguardedness, and corruptions of others, in striving to get a living out of them, increase the difficulties amongst them, while the inhabitants of other parts, who guard against oppression, and, with one consent train up their children in frugality and useful labour, live more harmoniously. If we trace the claims of the ninth or tenth of these great landlords, down to the first possessor, and find the claim supported throughout by instruments strongly drawn and witnessed; after all, we could not admit a belief into our hearts, that he had a right to so great a portion of land, after such a numerous increase of inhabitants.

says he, "I met an Indian, and had some friendly conversation with him. In the evening we pitched our tent near the banks of the same river, having laboured hard in crossing some of those mountains called the Blue-Ridge, and by the roughness of the stones, and the cavities between them, and the steepness of the hills, it appeared dangerous.

"Near our tent, on the sides of large trees peeled for that purpose, were various representations of men going to, and returning from the wars, and of some killed in battle. This being a path heretofore used by warriors; and as I walked about viewing those Indian histories, which were painted mostly in red, but some in black, and thinking on the innumerable afflictions which the proud, fierce spirit produceth in the world; thinking on the toils and fatigues of warriors, travelling over mountains and deserts; thinking on their miseries and distresses when wounded far from home by their enemies; and of their bruises and great weariness in chasing one another over the rocks and mountains; and of their restless, unquiet state of

"The first possessor, of that twentieth part, held no more, we suppose, than an equal portion, but when the Lord, who first gave these twenty men possession of this island, unknown to all others, gave being to numerous people, who inhabited the twentieth part, whose nature required the fruits thereof for their sustenance, this great claimer of the soil could not have a right to the whole, to dispose of it in gratifying his irregular desires; but they, as creatures of the most high God, possessor of Heaven and earth, had a right to part of what this great claimer held, though they had no instruments to confirm their right. Thus oppression, in the extreme, appears terrible; but oppression, in more refined appearances, remains to be oppression, and where the smallest degree of it is cherished, it grows stronger and more extensive."

mind, who live in this spirit, and of the hatred which mutually grows up in the minds of the children of those nations engaged in war with each other. During these meditations, the desire to cherish the spirit of love and peace amongst these people, arose very fresh in me. This was the first night that we lodged in the woods; and being wet with travelling in the rain, the ground, our tent, and the bushes which we purposed to lay under our blankets also wet, all looked discouraging; but I believed, that it was the Lord who had thus far brought me forward, and that he would dispose of me as he saw good, and therein I felt easy.

"On the seventeenth day of our journey, we reached Wehaloosing about the middle of the afternoon: and the first Indian that we saw was a woman of a modest countenance, with a Bible, who first spoke to our guide, and then, with a harmonious voice, expressed her gladness at seeing us, having before heard of our coming: then, by the direction of our guide, we sat down on a log, and he went to the town, to tell the people we were come. After a while, we heard a conkshell blow several times, and then we were kindly invited into a house near the town, where we found, I suppose, about sixty people sitting in silence; and after sitting a short time, I stood up, and acquainted them with the nature of my visit, and that a concern for their good had made me willing to come thus far to see them: all in a few short sentences, which some of them understanding, interpreted to the others, and there appeared gladness amongst them."

After staying some time with these friendly Indians, and frequently holding meetings with them, he felt his mind at liberty to return home. He accordingly took leave

of them in general, at the conclusion of meeting.

From this time we collect little more from his Journal concerning him, than that, in 1772, he embarked for England on a religious visit. After his arrival there, he travelled through many counties, preaching in different meetings of the Society, till he came to the city of York, but even there, though he was far removed from the sight of those whose interests he had so warmly espoused, he was not forgetful of their wretched condition. At the quarterly meeting for that county, he brought their case before those present in an affecting manner. He exhorted these to befriend their cause. He remarked that as they, the Society of Quakers, when under

outward sufferings, had often been concerned to lay them before the legislature, and thereby had frequently obtained relief; so he recommended this oppressed part of the creation to their notice, that they might, as the way opened, represent their sufferings as individuals, if not as a religious society, to those in authority. This was the last opportunity that he had of interesting himself in behalf of this injured people; for soon afterwards he was seized with the small-pox at the house of a friend in the city of York. His disorder, which increased speedily, and was very afflictive, was borne with much meekness, patience, and Christian fortitude.—He died the 7th of October 1772.

DETACHED ANECDOTES.

ELIAS ASHMOLE, AND DR. FRANKLIN.

NO kinds of study can differ more from each other, than the same from itself, as pursued by a man of a strong, and by one of a weak understanding. The first will render a small object important; the second, an important one little. The history of literature abounds with instances in proof of this assertion. I shall mention one. Elias Ashmole in the last century obtained considerable reputation here in the multifarious character of a *philosopher*. He was an astronomer, but this noble science in his hands turned to judicial astrology. He was a chemist, but under this title alchemy was the real object of pursuit. He was a naturalist, but his taste rather led him to be a collector, than a scientific observer of nature. He was an antiquary, and in that capacity made large collections for the

BELFAST MAG. NO. LI.

history of free-masonry in this country: afterwards, he soared to the most noble order of the garter; the history of which, with all its laws and institutions, was his *opus magnum*. In this man were united the valuable qualities of industry, exactness and perseverance: but the foundation of good sense was wanting. How different from one "qui nil molitur inepte," all whose pursuits are directed by a sound understanding! Such an one was the wise Franklin, who from the most trivial facts could deduce the most important conclusions; who had always something truly valuable in prospect, and whose touch converted every meaner material to gold.

It is not then merely the species of study, but the mind and spirit with which it is pursued, that should regulate our estimate of the intellectual hours of the student.

P P [Dr. Aikin's Letters to his Son.]